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CHEMICAL MATERIALS AGENCY

MEDIA RELEASE

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Army's mobile technology prepares for action

Explosive Destruction System to support Dover Air Force Base

ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND, Md. – Dover Air Force Base officials have requested support from the Army's Non-Stockpile Chemical Materiel Program here to dispose of a chemical warfare munition discovered in Delaware.

The Army plans to safely dispose of the World War I-era munition in mid-October using the Explosive Destruction System. The Army has used the EDS to successfully treat more than 200 chemical warfare items, including 22 items recently treated at Dugway Proving Ground, Utah.

NSCMP officials have scheduled an open house so the public can view the EDS Wednesday, Oct. 6, from 2 to 8 p.m. at the Delaware Agricultural Museum and Village in Dover. Officials from the Air Force, Department of the Army and Army Corps of Engineers will join NSCMP to answer questions about the technology and planned operations.

According to an Air Force press release, Dover AFB explosive ordnance disposal personnel brought the munition to the air base July 19 after a local state trooper found the item in Bridgeville, Del. Air Force officials requested support from the U.S. Army Guardian Brigade's Technical Escort Unit, also located at APG, to assess the item.

TEU confirmed the substance was the chemical warfare blister agent mustard. The munition remains safely stored at Dover Air Force Base.

Headquartered at the Edgewood Area of APG, NSCMP is mandated by Congress to treat chemical warfare materiel recovered on military installations or formerly used defense sites in a safe, environmentally sound and cost-effective manner.

The EDS uses an explosion and vapor containment chamber to detonate a munition, then neutralizes the chemical agent inside the airtight chamber. Army officials ship the remaining liquid and fragments to a permitted commercial disposal facility. Teams from the Edgewood Chemical Biological Center, also located at APG, operate the EDS.

Since 1999, NSCMP has built a solid performance and safety record with the EDS through successful missions including Rocky Mountain Arsenal in Commerce City, Colo., the former Camp Sibert in Gadsden, Ala., and extensive testing overseas at Porton Down, United Kingdom. In the summer of 2003, NSCMP used the EDS to successfully treat 15 World War I-era 75 mm projectiles, which also contained mustard agent, recovered at a burial site in the Spring Valley area of northwest Washington, D.C.

The Army is committed to accurately assessing and classifying recovered suspect chemical warfare materiel, and providing maximum protection to workers and the public while complying with all applicable environmental rules and regulations.

NSCMP leads the nation in the development and use of advanced technology to safely eliminate America's non-stockpile chemical materiel in an environmentally sound and cost-effective manner. A division of the U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency, NSCMP researches and develops treatment options and destruction plans that comply with all federal, state and local regulations, and encourages public participation in its activities. For additional information visit the CMA Web site at *http://www.cma.army.mil.*

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